



THE ROYAL BRITISH LEGION
 "Y" Services (Garats HaY) Branch
 (BR 3502)
 Branch Patron; General Sir Sam Cowan KCB CBE



MINUTES OF THE ROYAL BRITISH LEGION "Y" SERVICES (GARATS HA Y) BRANCH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD AT BURLEIGH COURT, LOUGHBOROUGH ON SATURDAY 7th NOVEMBER 2009 COMMENCING AT 1400HRS

MEMBERS PRESENT: 33

ACTION

1. ACT OF REMEMBRANCE: The President invited all members present to stand. He then cited the Act of Remembrance.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: The Acting Secretary, stated that she had received apologies from the following:

Ted Roberts, Bill Brockie, Jackie Farrell, Albert Taylor, Lloyd & Jean Richards, Chris & James Whimpenny, Jenny Crane, John & Pat Skipper, Ian Neal., Terry Stanley, John & Cathie Clark, Gerry Kane, Clark Fatchett, Dennis Underwood and Steve Jarvis

3. CHAIRMAN'S OPENING REMARKS: The Chairman, Bob White, stated that he would try to keep his remarks brief and to the point. He began by welcoming everyone to yet another new venue for our AGM. Burleigh Court came with strong recommendations and a request from the membership to move away from the somewhat poor offerings of the Ramada Hotel In Loughborough. The facilities, and the care and attention of our co-ordinator, have been excellent. More importantly, the costs are far cheaper than the Ramada (although the drinks are a little expensive!). The Committee would greatly appreciate feedback from the membership, as it is the intention to return here, if all goes well. The Chairman said it was good to see some new faces amongst the "old and bold", the latter comment meant in the kindest way. As it has been in previous years, we have unfortunately sadly lost friends, but also fortunately gained new colleagues. Later in the AGM, there will be a short presentation from our Guest Speaker, Carolyn Garner. Carolyn was warmly welcomed, and thanked for taking time out to visit us. The Chairman explained that Carolyn was now the National Branches District Secretary, our County Secretary in effect. The National Branches District is now functioning well, with four of our own Branch members on its Committee, including its Chairman, John Clark. Bob concluded by again thanking everyone for their attendance, and he was looking forward to the social highlights tonight and the service tomorrow.

Chairman/All

4. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING: (6 Nov 08) The Acting Secretary explained that the minutes of last years AGM, were believed placed on our Web Site, However, some copies had been placed out for members to peruse. She requested if there were any comments from them. There being no comments from the floor, the minutes of the previous meeting held on Saturday 8th November 2008 were confirmed and accepted as a true and accurate record.

Secretary/All

Proposed by: Roger Manser

Seconded by: Dennis Weir

Carried Unanimously

5. MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES: There were no matters arising from the last minutes.

Secretary

6. ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA: There were no additions to the agenda.

7. PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS: The President welcomed everyone to a new venue and format for the evening and hoped it would be agreeable to all. During this past year the Branch had lost Dennis Crane, Mick Green, Danny Cullen, and although not a Branch member, John O'Brien, long time Paymaster of Comms & Sy Gp (UK). The President then briefly outlined the past year. British Forces remain active in 2 operational theatres. Iraq – vastly reduced since we last spoke but remains vital to the efforts not only in Iraq but also for the provision of the Air Station providing strategic flying of I

President/All

ISTAR assets in the Afgan theatre. Afghanistan – need no introduction to anyone who has caught even a glimpse of National news or newspapers. Upwards of 9500 troops now deployed. 96 killed in action this year to date. Countless more injured, in the main very seriously. 1% of those deployed are killed, with the overwhelming majority of casualties in infantry on the ground. It is suggested that of a platoon of 30 personnel deploying at least 2 will not return and at least 4 will come back without limbs. It is extreme bravery to deploy under those odds. Our own members continue to be actively involved in both theatres of operation. Many in theatre and many more working from the UK base in the provision of communications and intelligence in direct support of the war. There are people here today recently returned from theatre and others due to deploy early next year. What do the casualty statistics mean? It has been the worst year since the Falklands War. 93 deaths means 93 more families and dependents – people the Legion is there to help, as well as those returning wounded. Now 1 in 6 people in the country are potential beneficiaries of the Legion, an onerous task that the organisation bears with pride. The President stated that we are a membership organisation and once again the National President at Conference reported further decline in membership, a trend that must be reversed if the Legion is to survive long term. David asked us last year to try and recruit. Many have and he thanked everyone and requested us to keep up the effort in the coming year. More over, spread the word of what the organisation does and stands for, particularly amongst those still serving who do not understand. Help for Heroes doe's great things but in a highly focused field. Young Heroes are in the forefront of people minds now, but will with time become old men and women who still need help. Will Help for Heroes still be around to give it when the war is over and it's faded from popular opinion? Perhaps not, but God willing and with effort from us all. The Royal British Legion will.

President/All

8. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT AND OBJECTIVES

Chairman/All

The Chairman's report is attached at Annex A, the main points are:

1st Year as Chairman. Sincere thanks were made to all the Committee for the help, advice and guidance, and also Headquarter staff.

He thanked Joy for stepping in as Acting Secretary when Nige Watton had to unfortunately stand down.

Secretary

He reiterated the importance of increasing membership, and highlighted the Branch success regarding the Poppy Appeal.

The Chairman concluded with 2 objectives – 1) for us to continue to recruit more members and 2) to try and persuade more members to attend Branch events and activities.

9. REPORTS

a. Secretary

The Acting Secretary stated that it was April of this year that she took on this role from Nige Watton, who had to stand down due to work commitments. Joy said that the help she had received from all Committee members and Carolyn Garner at Headquarters has been invaluable. Although the membership has only increased slightly She was ever confident that there will always be an upward trend. She had used her persuasive powers at the Birgelen Veterans Association, handing out membership forms, and she intended to do the same at the "Spec Op" reunion on the 8 May 2010. There is still an untapped source and she was ever hopeful that ladies will realise that they too can also join, along with their partners. In February 2010, Joy and the Chairman will be attending a Branch Management course at the NMA. For Bob it will be a refresher, and for Joy, an induction. Joy went on to state that she would be completing this course, regardless of whether she is elected as the Branch Secretary, as it would improve her understanding of the Legion and its workings. The last eight months had been enjoyable, but also a steep learning curve. She thanked everyone for their support over this period. Joy concluded by stating that Burleigh Court was a first for the Branch and she would be grateful for feedback from the membership. She was hopeful that we could all meet again as a Branch in the Summer. Suggestion for venues would be a great help.

Secretary/All

All

b. Editor Newsletter:

John Neal commenced by stating that "hard copies" had been sent out to all the membership. The cost of production and postage was proving costly. From the morning Committee meeting it had been suggested that the Newsletter would be readily available on the Web Site, and that an "in house" print would be provided for those members who did not have Internet facilities. A letter would be sent out to the membership prior to Christmas, to gauge their feelings. John concluded by requesting input and content for the Newsletter. The Chairman then read out the Certificate of Appreciation to be presented to John Skipper, our previous Editor.

John Neal/All

John Neal

Chairman

c. Membership:

The Acting Secretary informed members present that as of today she would be taking on the additional role of membership. Currently the membership stood at 421. There had been 5 new members recently, but unfortunately the Branch had lost Danny Cullen, aged 95 years, and stalwart Maisie Holland, whose membership had lapsed on October. The Chairman was to check on Maisie's status and report back.

Secretary/All
Chairman

d. Welfare: There had been no welfare cases this year, although advice had been provided for one non-branch member. Pete Derrick stated that Welfare is to be dealt with locally. However, if there is an emergency, members could liaise with Pete, who would willingly point individuals in the right direction. His contact details can be found on the Web Site. Dave Street, our Vice Chairman, was presently undertaking the role of Welfare Officer with the National Branches District Committee.

All

e. Branch Standard and Standard Bearer: The standard had been displayed at the Langeleben reunion, paraded excellently by Dave Street. In addition, Dave Foley, our Standard Bearer had been present at the funeral of John Lovett. John was not a Branch member but was well known within the Intelligence community.

Dave Street
Dave Foley

10. COMMENT ON REPORTS/ADOPTION OF OBJECTIVES: The Chairman asked for comments from the members, on the reports and his objectives for 2010. There were no comments. The Chairman thanked all Officers and Committee members for their reports.

Proposed by: John Farrell

Seconded by: Dave Geere

Carried Unanimously

11. PRESENTATION AND ADOPTION OF ACCOUNTS: John Farrell handed out copies of the Branch Accounts, and explained the figures in detail. The closing balance at 30th September 2009 was £3688.70. The £500 initially given for Welfare was now transferred into the main account. Martin Foster queried the total of £322.33 annotated against conferences, etc. It was explained that this was for 2008 and not 2009. Following the introduction of the Branch Funds Initiative issued to all Branches, our monies would be transferred to the Headquarter account. It was intended to retain around £1000 as a working amount, and the remainder would earn around 5% interest from the national bank. In conclusion, the Treasurer put forward the accounts for adoption by the members present at the AGM. Brief Branch account details are attached at Annex B. The audited account was to be with the National Branches District Secretary by 31st December 2009.

Treasurer/All
Treasurer

Proposed by: Peter Westwell

Seconded by: Pete Derrick

Carried Unanimously

12. ELECTION OF OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS: The Chairman commented on the current Branch Officers and Committee members. There had been no response for Committee posts from the article placed in the Newsletter. There were vacancies, should anyone be willing to stand. Martin Foster put his name forward, which was initially accepted by the Chairman. It was then pointed out by Dennis Weir, that we had not adhered to the correct election procedure, recently introduced. Martin was requested to provide a CV ready for potential ratification at the next AGM. His Proposer and Secunder were Dave Street and John Farrell. The Chairman confirmed the following Officer posts were to continue until 2011. The President, Chairman, Vice Chairman and the Editor Newsletter. The following Committee members were continuing in their posts until 2010. Dennis Weir, Mike Frankish and Nick Berry. Because of an oversight at the last AGM, the following Committee members were elected to serve, also until 2011.

All

Committee

Pete Derrick and Ted Roberts.

Pete Derrick
Ted Roberts

Proposed by: Dennis Weir

Seconded by: John Farrell

Carried Unanimously

The following was nominated for post of Branch Secretary. (Includes the Membership portfolio).

Joy White

Joy White

Proposed by: John Neal

Seconded by: Dave Street

Carried Unanimously

13. ANNUAL CONFERENCE MOTIONS

aLL

Nil.

14. APPOINTMENT OF ANNUAL AND DISTRICT CONFERENCE DELEGATES: The Chairman explained that David & Christine Whimpenny, and both he and Joy, had attended the National and District Conferences respectively, last year. He asked for volunteers from the floor for these Conferences in 2010.

Annual District Conference: 22/23 May 10 at the Villa Marina, Douglas, Isle of Man

Martin & Linda Foster

Martin and Linda Foster

Proposed by: John Neal

Seconded by: Dennis Weir

District National Conference: 13 Jan 10 at Haig House, London

Bob & Joy White

Bob and Joy White

Proposed by: Pete Derrick

Seconded by: Peter Westwell

Carried Unanimously

The Chairman then informed members that there were 4 vacancies for Committee posts on the National Branches District. If anyone was interested, please see him or the Secretary. A CV together with a passport size photograph would be required. Completed forms were to be with the National Branches District Secretary by 1 December 09.

All

The Chairman concluded by reading out a report from our Board of Trustees member, Terry Whittles.

All

15. GUEST SPEAKER – CAROLYN GARNER, SECRETARY NATIONAL BRANCH DISTRICT:

All

Carolyn Garner then gave a presentation of the organisation of the National Branches District, including her role as Secretary, and that of other Committee members, She concluded by providing the members present with the detailed and important Calendar events, dates and timings. The Chairman thanked Carolyn for her excellent presentation, and informed members present that she would be joining us for our social evening, and would be available for questions.

The Chairman, prompted by Committee members, reminded those present that each Branch of the National Branches District were allocated 4 tickets for the Annual Festival of Remembrance at the Albert Hall. Initial allocation to Branch members would be to those who had attended our AGM. If more than one request, names would be drawn from a hat.

16. CLOSING REMARKS: The Chairman indicated that it was hopeful that a Summer meeting could be held sometime in August 2010. However, the date and time of the next Annual General Meeting was Saturday 13th November 2010 at 1400 hours at a venue to be announced.

There being no other further points for the good and benefit of the AGM the Chairman closed the meeting at 1530hrs.

Chairman

Secretary:

Dated:

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT AND OBJECTIVES

I had this worry that by following the President, there would be many points that I would wish to make, which would have already be covered. If I do “double up” then please forgive me.

This has been my first year as your Chairman, and little did I realise that I would lose the Secretary so early on. As you are aware, Nige Watton is a serving Army Officer, whose work commitments were such, that he was unable to continue as the Branch Secretary. Fortunately, after a little coercion, I managed to persuade Joy to stand-in temporarily, and as a Committee, we are very grateful. I would, at this point, like to express my sincere thanks to all the Committee members for the guidance, advice and support this year.

We have continued to increase in membership, albeit very slowly. My request when I was elected, of recruiting one new member each, has been only a partial success. I hope though, that we can persevere and try to achieve this. There is still a vast “untapped” source out there, as Joy and I found at the recent Birgelen Veterans Reunion, where we have persuaded a few to join the Branch. The “Spec Op” reunion on the 8 May 10 will provide another opportunity.

The Poppy Appeal this year has benefitted greatly from Branch donations (well over £4000), with £500 coming from John Neal’s daughter Steph, who climbed onto the back of an instructor and jumped willingly out of a perfectly safe aircraft, brave girl!!

Our Branch Standard was taken out to the Langeleben Reunion in Germany, and paraded efficiently by our Vice Chairman, Dave Street. On its return, our Standard Bearer Dave Foley, took it recently, to the funeral of John Lovatt (not a Branch Member but a “Y” service colleague).

May I conclude with the following 2 objectives – 1) for us to continue to recruit more members, and 2) to try and persuade more members to attend branch events and activities.

Thank you, God Bless and take care.

**Brief Report – Treasurer
For Committee & Annual General Meeting at
The Burleigh Court, Loughborough
Saturday 7th November 2009**

Financial Report as at 30th September 2009

Opening Balance (1)	£4288.21
Receipts (2)	£2335.80
Payments (3)	£2935.31
Closing Balance (1 + 2 – 3)	<u>£3688.70</u>

J R Farrell
Treasurer